



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Oct. 22, 2012

For More Information, Contact:  
Sandi Washek  
Division of Air Quality  
North Dakota Department of Health  
Phone: 701.328.5188  
E-mail: [swashek@nd.gov](mailto:swashek@nd.gov)

### **State Health Department Cautions Residents About the Dangers of Lead-Based Paint**

BISMARCK, N.D. – In conjunction with *Home Indoor Air Quality Month*, the North Dakota Department of Health is cautioning residents about the dangers of lead-based paint.

Governor Jack Dalrymple has proclaimed October 2012 as Home Indoor Air Quality Month to encourage North Dakotans to learn more about indoor air quality issues.

Lead is a highly toxic metal that was used for many years in products found in and around homes, such as paint and wood stains. Lead can cause a range of health effects, from behavioral problems and learning disabilities, to seizures and death. At least 4 million households nationwide currently have children living in them that are being exposed to lead. There are approximately half a million U.S. children ages 1 to 5 with blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL), the reference level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated. A simple blood test by your health-care provider or physician can prompt actions that will prevent permanent damage that could last a lifetime. Children ages 6 years and younger are at the most risk for health effects from lead, and the only way to know if a child has lead poisoning is by testing his or her blood.

Although residential use of lead-based paint was banned in 1978, it is still the most common source of lead in the home. Lead-based paint is found in many places in and around older homes (for example, interior and exterior walls, ceilings, stairways, door and window trim and baseboards).

According to the Department of Health, all lead-based paint surfaces should be inspected regularly to look for signs of wear or disintegration. Any lead-based painted surface that shows signs of deterioration can easily release lead into the environment. In particular, watch for hazardous conditions such as chipping, flaking and water damage. Any damaged lead-based paint should be repaired immediately. Paint chips containing lead are a hazard if ingested.

– more –

---

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200  
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: [health@nd.gov](mailto:health@nd.gov)

*Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).*

Lead-based paint also contributes to another serious hazard – lead dust. Lead dust is easily inhaled or swallowed and can be scattered throughout the house, where it can get on toys, floors, play areas, soils and food.

“Any home remodeling project that disturbs lead-based paint in a home built before 1978 should be carried out properly to avoid exposing occupants to lead,” said Sandi Washek with the Division of Air Quality in the North Dakota Department of Health. “Children and pregnant women should never be around renovation or remodeling projects that create lead dust.”

Despite the continued presence of lead in the environment, lead poisoning is entirely preventable. As of April 22, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) passed new regulations for contractors working in homes built before 1978. The Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting (RR&P) rule mandates that remodelers who intend to work in pre-1978 homes, child-care facilities and schools to register their company with EPA and complete an eight-hour training and certification course with an accredited trainer. The course teaches remodelers how to safely contain lead in homes and child-occupied facilities as it is being disturbed and reduce exposure to residents and workers.

Common renovation activities like sanding, painting, cutting, replacing windows and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips that can be harmful to children and adults. Consumers should be aware of the RRP rule and make sure that any contractor they hire is EPA-RRP certified. Owners conducting repairs in their own homes are not covered by this rule (unless they receive compensation, such as landlords).

To learn more about the lead-based paint Renovation Remodeling and Painting regulations for home renovation and remodeling when there is a risk of lead hazards, contact Sandi Washek, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5188. Information also is available on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovation.htm> or the North Dakota Department of Health’s website at <http://www.ndhealth.gov/AQ/IAQ/LBP/>. To learn more about childhood lead poisoning, visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/>

– 30 –

*Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at [www.nddohpressroom.gov](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov).*